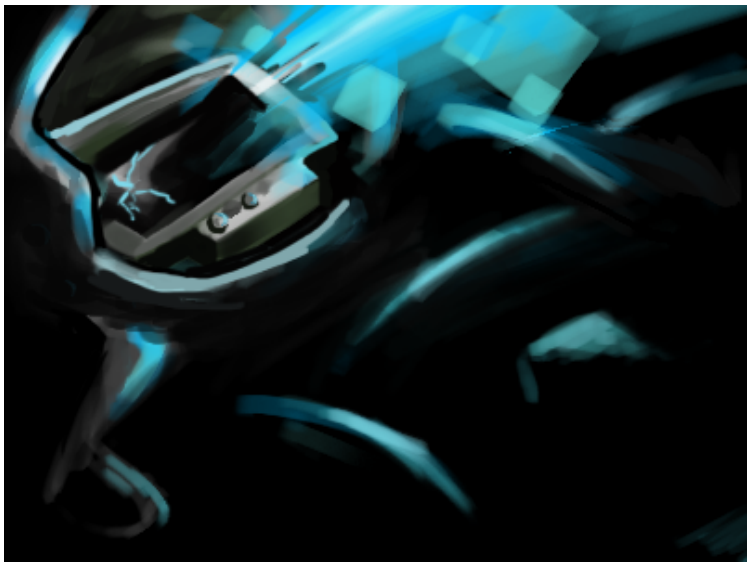
Vectoralism

The Economic System of the 21st Century

Why is our tech going to shit, and what can hackers and organizers do about it?



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Final Thoughts

Vectoralism is still a new concept, as such the theory, tools and methodologies we use to understand it are still being developed today. Even so, we have the power and strategies to be able to shape our own futures together.

To all of us hackers, tech workers and tech users: we need to organize, form tech collectives and build or support alternatives to Big Tech platforms, and push back against technology being used for harmful purposes.

We need to examine how we develop, interact with and use tech, and ask ourselves: Who builds our tech? Who funds it? Who uses it and who is it being used on?

The solutions are not entirely technological. Many of these issues apply globally and ground-up organizing across borders is necessary for us to be able to match up to the vectoralist class and the internationally interconnected adversaries we all face.

Live well, fight hard, and all power to all the people.

from our communities. And when it doesn't—it hasn't—at a certain point we have to ask ourselves, what are we doing?"

But disposability extends much further than this. Whether disposability from labor markets, disposability of the information we create, or disposability in terms of individuals, all of this is interconnected.

Vectoralist interests demand maximum disposability across all these domains and more, so people are infinitely interchangeable and thus infinitely extractable. If we fall for disposability in our own organizing and communities, we are playing directly into the hands of the vectoralist class.

- How do we make sure that we do not treat anyone in our communities as disposable?
- How to we create ways for people to take accountability for the harms they have caused, and for people to heal from those harms?

Introduction

In 2025, there has been a sudden spurt of restrictive and privacy invasive policies around the world. The EU Digital Services Act and UK Online Safety Act requires users to verify their age to access "adult" material, and has the potential effect of classifying the existence of queer and trans people online as pornographic.

The EU's proposed "Chat Control" regulation, was revised to allow services to "voluntarily" scan private messages for "child sexual abuse material" before they're encrypted, paving the way for mass surveillance.

Australia's social media ban for under-16s that took effect on 10 December 2025, requires search engines to verify the age of their users in Australia to filter the results they display to users.

Big Tech companies have been sidling up to the far-right and authoritarian regimes, and are slowly restricting users' ability to use their devices in the way they wish. Google is looking to restrict users from installing apps, except those written by "verified developers", in the name of security.

What explains the rising tide of technofascism we see all around the world, and what can hackers and community organizers do to push back?

Enter vectoralism; a mode of production which emerged during the rise of the information age, which was cemented in the mid-2010s in the aftermath of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis during the zero-interest rate period.

1. What is Vectoralism?

“Vectoralism” is a term and concept coined by Australian-born theorist and writer McKenzie Wark in her 2004 book “A Hacker Manifesto”, and expanded upon in her 2019 work “Capital Is Dead: Is This Something Worse?”. Building off of Karl Marx’s work in describing the capitalist mode of production, Wark’s work describes a new mode of production in information-driven societies like the one we live in today.

First, what is vector?

To understand vectoralism, we must first understand what Wark means by “vector”. The following is an excerpt from A Hacker Manifesto (2004):

> *“In epidemiology, a vector is the particular means by which a given pathogen travels from one population to another. Water is a vector for cholera, bodily fluids for HIV. By extension, a vector may be any means by which information moves.*
>
> *Telegraph, telephone, television, telecommunications: these terms name not just particular vectors, but a general abstract capacity that they bring into the world and expand.*
>
> *All are forms of telesthesia, or perception at a distance. A given media vector has certain fixed properties of speed, bandwidth, scope and scale, but may be deployed anywhere, at least in principle. The uneven development of the vector is political and economic, not technical.”*

sense-make the linkages between the extraction of their data and the material issues they face.

When people understand that withdrawing our metadata from the vectoralists through privacy-focused platforms and practices allows us to have the upper hand at the bargaining table, there is much more incentive for many different segments of people to rally together and successfully push back against vectoralist extraction and the negative impact it has on our lives.

- What does an organized hacker class looks like?
- How do we organize across different segments of the hacker class?
- What are the common struggles across each type of information and knowledge production?
- How do we ensure that the vectoralist class can’t drive a wedge between different segments of the hacker class?
- How do we make sure the alternatives we build can see mass adoption?

Disposability

Finally, we should understand a concept adrienne maree brown calls ‘disposability’. As she says in an interview with QKED:

“What I’m making a case for is that disposability is a concept that might be the most villainous for our species: to think that there’s some way we can get rid of people who commit harm, and that will remove the harmful behavior and the harmful belief systems

Sense-making

Secondly, we need to rebuild sense-making capacities in our communities and push back against any and all attempts to sense-break instead. Vectoralism was only possible because of the Great Epistemic Crisis and the sense-breaking that came in its aftermath, so in order to overturn it and the negative effects of it, we must first overturn the Great Epistemic Crisis.

We need to be able to have a base of information that we can refer to that we know is accurate, especially in times where online censorship is on the rise (refer to our zine on archival and data distribution for more information), and we need to fend off any attempts from ourselves and others to sense-break us.

- How do we build our own sense-making capabilities?
- How do we make sure we aren't sense-breaking instead?
- How do we make sure that everyone in our communities are equipped with the knowledge and frameworks needed to sense-make?

Grounding in material concerns

Thirdly, we need to make sure that we are able to connect vectoralist extraction to the material concerns that people have.

The vectoralist extraction of data and how it affects things like job stability, the cost of living and even our physical safety as previously discussed in this zine. However, because of how so much gets abstracted under vectoralism, combined with the effects of the Great Epistemic Crisis, many people are not able to

Wark provides a more concrete definition of vector in Capital Is Dead (2019):

> *"The vector of information includes the capacity to transmit, store, and process information. It is the material means for assembling so-called big data and realizing its predictive potential.*
>
> *The vectoralist class owns and controls patents, which preserve monopolies on these technologies. It owns or controls the brands and celebrities that galvanize attention. It owns the logistics and supply chains that keep information in its proprietary stacks."*

In other words, **vector** is the means by which digital information is created, transmitted, processed and/or stored. Vector is also a type of property, owned by the **vectoralist class.**

Who are the vectoralists?

The vectoralist class includes Big Tech companies such as Google, Meta, Apple and Amazon. These companies control the flows of information that allow them to collect data from and about their users, which they then use to customize advertisements and recommendations. This applies not only to social media platforms, but also to device manufacturers and operating systems such as Android and Windows which are increasingly getting telemetry features built into them.

AI Companies such as OpenAI and Anthropic are also part of the vectoralist class. They control the systems and infrastructure for data scraping and model training.

Companies that control the means of communications are also vectoralist, such as ISPs and chat platforms like Discord and Slack.

Nation-state vectoralist interests also exist, as seen in countries that have been bolstering their surveillance capabilities, or pushing for centralized digital IDs.

What is the hacker class?

While the term “hacker” is now widely used as a perjorative term to refer to people who illegally break into computer systems without authorization, the term hacker is defined in the Internet Users' Glossary as:

> *“A person who delights in having an intimate understanding of the internal workings of a system, computers and computer networks in particular. The term is often misused in a pejorative context, where "cracker" would be the correct term.”*

In A Hacker Manifesto (2004), Wark conceptualizes vectoralism as comprising both a vectoralist class and a **hacker class,** and defines the hacker class as follows:

> *“Hackers create the possibility of new things entering the world. Not always great things, or even good things, but new things. In art, in science, in philosophy and culture, in any production of knowledge where data can be gathered, where information can be extracted from it, and where in that information new possibilities for the world produced, there are hackers hacking the new out of the old. While we create these new worlds, we do not possess them. That*

5. Going forward

In order to respond to what is happening, we need to organize and build our own power to ensure we have a say in how our communities and societies function.

What that looks like for each of us depends on how we are positioned within our own spaces and places. Regardless, there are things that hackers and organizers should think about when developing effective organizing and messaging strategies.

Modes of production

Firstly, we cannot forget that the modes of production in our society are concurrent; without addressing all them, we cannot mount an effective response to any of the issues we have traversed.

Vectoralist, Capitalist and Feudalist extraction are different in the way they operate, and in the modern day any given person is likely to face all three in significant proportions. Neglecting, or prioritizing one over the others results in an ineffective response to the problems we face today.

- What instruments do we need to build so that we can reclaim ownership of what we build and produce?
- How does extraction work under the different modes of production, and how do they intersect? How do we use this information to make the toolboxes we need to fight back?

understand why people would choose to adopt or discontinue using these alternatives, and use the lessons learned from that to iterate and improve our offerings.

Community tech defense

Bad actors of all kinds will use technology to further their ends. This can range from individuals committing tech-enabled stalking, to state actors using surveillance cameras or StingRay phone trackers to identify and detain people, not to mention the attacks on privacy and freedom of information mentioned at the start of this zine. Developing countermeasures to these threats should be considered a key function within our communities.

Hackers have a key role to play, by organizing within their communities to build up capacity for community tech defense. Our communities need to be educated on how these technological threats affect us, and how to defend ourselves against them.

Things like teaching your community to use a VPN to circumvent restrictive policies like age verification, or building an archive to circumvent censorship efforts in your area, is itself a form of community tech defense.

An archive can be a self-hosted server deployment, but it can also be a flash drive containing information on a particular topic of importance passed around a trusted community. To learn more, you can read our zine on archival and data distribution.

> *which we create is mortgaged to others, and to the interests of others, to states and corporations who monopolize the means for making worlds we alone discover. We do not own what we produce—it owns us."*

She elaborates further in Capital is Dead (2019):

> *"By hacker class I mean everyone who produces new information out of old information, and not just people who code for a living. Part of the struggle of our time is to see a common class interest in all kinds of information making, whether in the sciences, technology, media, culture, or art. What we all have in common is producing new information but not owning the means to realize its value. And yet the way we go about this is not quite the same thing as labor, just as being a worker is not quite the same thing as being a farmer."*

The **vectoralist class** controls the production, organization and flow of information via intellectual property, proprietary tech stacks and infrastructure.

The **hacker class** produces new, reusable information by applying their labor-power upon informational "raw-material", but do not own the means to which valuation of new information is realized and does not get paid for its surplus-value; which is instead extracted by the vectoralist class in exchange for payment only for their labor-power.

The Great Epistemic Crisis

You may be wondering how we got to this point in the first place. In order to explain that, we need to talk about something called the Great Epistemic Crisis.

Technological advancements, starting from the mid-20th century and continuing to the present, led to an overwhelming abundance of information. Information was being produced at a faster rate than it could be processed.

Under the deluge of information that no one has the time or energy to make sense of, people then turn to others to do the thinking that they cannot do themselves. This **cognitive outsourcing** does help people to cope with the overwhelming amount of information that they need to process every day, but if you let someone else do your thinking for you, they will inevitably do your thinking for their own interests.

The rise of this **sense-breaking** is easy to spot everywhere today, from people voting in politicians who fundamentally work against their own best interests, to the astroturfing in political campaigns and societal discourse, turning people's ability to make sense of the world against themselves.

However, it is not a given people would be overwhelmed by the volume of information we need to process today. With the 8-hour work day that is now growing longer in recent years, we simply have no time to process all this information. Why did the progress of technology and productivity growth not lead to a reduction in working hours and material scarcity?

Tech infrastructure as commons

There also exists a massive power imbalance between an individual hacker and the vectoralist class. The tech stacks that power the devices, platforms and services we use have become so complex, that it is impossible for an individual hacker to understand.

However, tech companies have the resources to get together teams of people who need only understand their part of the tech stack, allowing these companies to wield technology to as they so choose, without needing to understand the tech stack.

Alternatives to the platforms owned by Big Tech do exist, such as Mastodon for micro-blogging or Matrix for secure decentralized communications, but who pays for hosting these alternatives? Are the developers of the protocols and software that power these alternatives properly remunerated for their labor?

If we are to take back ownership and control of our tech, then we have to stop viewing the platforms we use in our daily lives as simply products, but as public commons, akin to roads, electrical grids, and other essential infrastructure.

Therefore, we need to see such projects as something we have a stake in, which we are motivated to maintain and contribute to, whether in terms of funding or technical contributions, on a consistent and sustainable basis.

Hackers should take the initiative to host deployments of these alternatives within our own communities, and to engage in outreach to others around us, to try and show them that these alternatives exist and are a possibility. We should also

This is especially evident in the domain of cybersecurity, where hackers are referred to with new names and titles such as “Cybersecurity Analyst”, “Incident Response Specialist”, and “Penetration Tester”, among others.

These hackers are conditioned during academic training and in the time they spend in the workforce to see ‘hackers’, and anyone who identifies with the term as criminals, who are to be treated with disgust and contempt.

As a result, the vectoralist class is able to use the term ‘hacker’ as a means of causing the hacker class to turn on itself, by labeling specific segments of the hacker class as ‘hackers’, thereby getting those who revile ‘hackers’ to attack those people.

One example of this can be seen in Jonathan Hall’s review of the UK’s Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act and the newly implemented National Security Act.

From an article from Tech Radar:

> *“He [Jonathan Hall] warns that developers of apps like Signal and WhatsApp could technically fall within the legal definition of "hostile activity" simply because their technology "make[s] it more difficult for UK security and intelligence agencies to monitor communications."*

In the current political climate, would developers of these applications, privacy activists as well as people working to circumvent censorship come to be seen as ‘hackers’, and be treated as deviant by segments of the hacker class that have come to be “professionalized”?

On the origins of vector

The modern 8-hour work day has roots in the works of Robert Owen, who had coined the phrase ‘Eight hours' labor, Eight hours' recreation, Eight hours' rest’ in 1817, but actual widespread adoption of the 8-hour work day only took place in the mid 1900s.

However, work and production had to be turned up during the World Wars, and post-war rebuilding meant yet more work needed to be done.

The geopolitical and ideological competition of the Cold War demanded maintained, if not increased, labor output, in both the Western and Eastern Blocs. Even with strong unions, it was not possible for the work-day to be reduced further.

Additionally, the new dominance of car-dependent sprawling development (especially in North America), resulted in long commutes and time wasted in traffic, taking away free time from workers outside of their working hours.

The erosion and collapse of stabilizing institutions such as labor organizing and post-war financial systems, and Reagan and Thatcher’s neoliberal economic policies in response to the 1970s recession, led to a decoupling of wages from productivity. Productivity rose, but workers have not been getting their share in either wages or reduced working hours.

The Reagan-Thatcher Doctrine, a combination of the allocation of resources towards the top via trickle-down economics and away from the bottom via austerity, needs to be understood as the

deliberate termination of the Golden Age of Capitalism, ruining the compact that allowed capitalism to persist.

The deregulation of the economy as part of the Reagan-Thatcher Doctrine also deregulated the finance sector, allowing the process of financialization to truly kickstart itself after being tempered by the Great Depression and the New Deal, World War II, the Marshall Plan and the Gold Standard/Bretton-Woods system. But what is financialization, anyway?

Financialization

In Financialization and the World Economy (2005), Gerald A. Epstein defines financialization as:

> *"The increasing importance of financial markets, financial motives, financial institutions, and financial elites in the operation of the economy and its governing institutions, both at the national and international level."*

As the economy was increasingly financialized, resources were diverted away from productive assets and real capital towards fictitious capital and speculative assets, because speculative assets have no cap on returns as they do not directly constitute physical assets which have an inherent limitation to changes in valuation. As such, there was a great deal of excess capital lying around, some of which was reinvested via Venture Capital.

At a time where traditional capitalist companies were seen as extremely unattractive due to their growth being tethered to the constraints of capitalist business, vectoralist companies were seen as extremely attractive due to the stratospheric growth rates the model promised.

4. What we can do

In the same way that industrial workers were the grunts of capitalism, the hackers and tech workers of today are the grunts of vectoralism. In an age where vectoralism has become the dictative mode of production, it is ever more important that all workers, including tech workers, unite and organize.

The principles for organizing under vectoralism are similar to those under capitalism. One effective method for standing up against the casualization of, and replaceability of tech workers is to form strong tech labor unions.

However, organizing under vectoralism has its own challenges. Workers stay at the same company for much shorter durations than they used to under traditional capitalism, making it hard to organize within a firm as your coworkers file in and out of the company over time.

Additionally, the very same technological advancements that drive vectoralism allow companies to hire workers remotely, dividing up their workforce across different locales making it a challenge to organize across them.

Furthermore, tech companies and other vectoralists understand that an organized hacker class is an impediment to their interests, and have been working to drive a wedge not only between the hacker class and other workers, but within the hacker class itself. As previously mentioned, the term "hacker" has taken up such a negative connotation that the vectoralist class has been able to divide certain segments of the hacker class.

In one example of the collaboration of private and state vectoralist interests, the FBI was able to track a protester, Lore Elisabeth Blumenthal, in the George Floyd protests via gaining information from her LinkedIn profile, as well as the Etsy store that sold her the t-shirt she wore to the protest.

Multiple states have also been pushing for digital ID, and combined with an increase in the use of facial recognition technologies for purposes like identity verification and law enforcement, we are facing a world in which it is becoming increasingly difficult for any individual to avoid state surveillance.

Predictive policing has also been used in the UK, with Amnesty International calling for a ban, describing it as ‘a modern method of racial profiling, reinforcing racism and discrimination in policing.’

With increasing authoritarianism and geopolitical hostilities, everyday people will be swept up in the process. The escalation of ICE raids and detentions using information extracted by vector exemplifies this, as an MPR News article details:

> *"They not only can gather data from states and localities, but can buy data from data brokers, aggregators and miners, from companies. LexisNexis, Thomson Reuters, Equifax, like the credit bureaus, Palantir and Clearview AI, are all companies that ICE either contracts with or has relationships with."*

But given the cooperation of state and private vectoralists to push changes on the legislative and social level, what can hackers and organizers even do?

The main thing required for a vectoralist company to grow is increased adoption of their platform or service, with minuscule amounts of labor (in the form of coders or moderators) and physical infrastructure (in the form of servers) needed relative to traditional capitalist companies.

Thus, funding flowed into vectoralist companies, who promised the untethered growth that was being sought out at the time, giving rise to the archetypal Tech Startup. The meteoric growth rates that were promised became expected from investors, and thus the ‘exit as a goal’ strategy arose. The exponential growth that became expected of vectoralist companies was simply not sustainable, and so the exit strategy became the best viable outcome for vectoralist firms.

This eventually extended to proliferation of cryptocurrency and NFTs, as more aspects of life would come to be financialized in increasingly abstracted forms.

2: How Vectoralism Works

Concurrent modes of production

Of course, capitalism is still here, re-configuring itself to co-exist with, and subordinate to vectoralism (i.e Venture Capital funding tech companies).

Capitalist extraction and manufacturing are still around, but now in service of vectoralism (i.e. the production of computers, phones, servers; mining cobalt and lithium for batteries).

From Wark's Capital Is Dead (2019):

> *"In Capital, Marx mostly deals with an ideal-type political economy with two classes. But in his political writings it is clear that he understands social formations as hybrids of combined and overlapping modes of production. His writing on France isn't just a grand confrontation between proletariat and bourgeoisie; the scene looms large with farmers, landlords, and peasants.*
>
> *So here I'm simply taking my cue from the political writings and thinking a matrix of six classes, three ruling and three subordinate. The dominant classes are landlords, capitalists, vectoralists. The subordinate classes are farmers, workers, hackers."*

Newer modes of production do not replace older modes of production in their entirety; rather, multiple modes of production co-exist concurrently and interact with each other through

State vectoralist interests

States have also been pushing for vectoralism, but unlike under Capitalism, state and private vectoralists do not need to compete with each other like state and private capitalists do. Vector, being flows of information, can effectively be shared with infinitely many people, without compromising the utility that someone can get out of the data that comes from that vector, in a way that is not possible with sharing land or capital.

As such, the mentality of inter-vectoralist competition shifts from 'you cannot have what I have', to 'what you have I should also have'. Using the same sets of data, both corporations and states can advance their own interests without either coming into conflict or being stymied by the other, which is why so many vectoralist companies have been cozying up to various nations around the world.

In other words, the state is your Father, and the corporations are your Mother.

The reason why legislation such as (K)OSA, Chat Control, and DSA are becoming so widespread and so persistently pushed for is because both private and public vectoralists have a vested interest in seeing those bills be realized. States are able to extract more data from those under their jurisdiction in order to advance their own political interests, while the platforms that enforce these bills are now able to extract data that would otherwise not be feasible for them to extract without the express permission of both their users and the state.

Another equally concerning impact of AI is its use in more and more important decision-making functions within society.

To quote a slide from a 1979 IBM Training Document:

> *“A COMPUTER CANNOT BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE*
>
> *THEREFORE A COMPUTER MUST NEVER MAKE A MANAGEMENT DECISION”*

AI is used in both job hiring processes like screening CVs as well as in online content moderation (though known as ‘the YouTube algorithm’ etc.), leading to significant employment woes and the upending of people’s online social existence without warning or recourse.

Essentially, one goal of the vectoralist class is to use computers as a shield against being accountable for decisions. They are looking to construct a world which looks like this:

> *“A COMPUTER CANNOT BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE*
>
> *THEREFORE A COMPUTER ~~MUST NEVER~~ SHOULD AND MUST MAKE A MANAGEMENT DECISION”*

This is a world in which responsibility for the ramifications of things such as poor moderation, incorrect criminal sentencing or employment decisions can be offloaded, ensuring that the vectoralist class cannot be held accountable for it, while still being able to extract value through vector and to maintain their positions of control.

relations between the various extractive and extracted classes. Capitalism, feudalism and even slavery still exist in the modern day, and they continue to interact and intersect with one another.

Property: some definitions

Before we continue, let us define two types of property which relate to political economy.

Extractive property is a property exclusively owned by a given extractive class that allows it to extract surplus value from a lower class.

Dictative property is a subset of extractive property; specifically the kind of extractive property that makes a given extractive class the dictative class such that other modes of extraction are subordinated to it.

Under capitalism, capital was the dictative property that made the capitalist class the dictative class. That time is now over.

Vectoralism has become the dominant mode of production and extraction, where vector is the dictative property, and the vectoralist class who owns and controls vectors of information is the current dictative class.

Vectoralist extraction played out

One of the clearest examples of how Vectoralist extraction plays out is the story of Spotify Wrapped.

Spotify Wrapped is a yearly event where Spotify users are presented their listening information and statistics in the form of

an interactive story, consistently sparking off social media buzz and conversations annually.

Originally, Spotify Wrapped was just a playlist that would be sent to users, until Jewel Ham, who worked for Spotify as an intern in 2019, decided to pitch the interactive story concept that people are familiar with today. As Ham said in an interview with Refinery29 in 2020:

Ham recalls working extremely long hours on her Wrapped project because she felt so passionate about it. "I did so much overtime," she says. "I remember the day before the presentation, I left the office at about 4 a.m. so I could shower and get back at 6."

The overtime was her choice, but it doesn't change the fact that this was what it took to create a great idea. "I have an idea and I'm going to flesh it out — but I'm worth a stipend? It doesn't sit right with my spirit."

By owning the platform itself through which data flows, an example of vectoralist **extractive property**, Spotify controls the means through which the new information generated by Ham's labor could come to fruition. Consequently, Spotify, and not Ham, receives the bulk of surplus value generated by Ham's labor.

In other words, the vectoralist gets to collect and package vast amounts of data, turning it into dataset upon dataset, while the person responsible for coming up with the information that allows the vectoralist to do so receives little to no reward for it.

and so on, as an additional tool that people can use going forward. However, the reality under the hood is rather different.

Generative AI has been utilized in practice not as an additional benefit, but as a wholesale replacement of human workers, with swathes of people being pushed out in favor of things like AI chatbots, upending many people's livelihoods while decreasing the quality of services and systems.

AI is also increasingly being used as a tool for cognitive outsourcing. AI generated summaries have sprung up practically everywhere, from search engines to food delivery menus. More and more people have turned to using AI to generate things like shopping lists and travel itineraries, without truly knowing whether the information that is provided is accurate.

AI has also been used to cheaply produce misinformation and disinformation. Misleading, or even outright false information has flooded the internet, with search engine results clogged with AI generated articles and images filled with incorrect information.

Even academia isn't spared, with Elsevier rewriting papers with LLMs without consent of editors or authors, and multiple papers filled with false AI-generated information have been published.

In the deluge of AI generated falsehoods, it becomes nigh impossible to make sense of what we are seeing. AI has therefore become a sense-breaking tool instead.

Combined with the rise of students turning to AI to write their assignments, or with new coders turning to vibe coding, it raises serious questions on whether we are able to pass down essential skills and knowledge needed to keep society functioning.

phones have effectively required users to link their devices to Google or Apple for a long time now, and Windows has also followed the trend in recent years.

Hardware companies like Crucial are exiting the consumer business in favor of ‘larger, strategic customers in faster-growing segments’, i.e. AI companies and datacenters. This makes it even harder for users to access computing hardware, thus making them more reliant on these services to be able to function in modern society.

This gives the vectoralists who own these services outsized power over the information that you use, receive and control, allowing them to extract ever increasing amounts of data from you through these vectors. Combined with the push to integrate AI into many of these services, like with Cortana and Copilot on Windows, the vectoralists wish to erode your control over the data you use and produce with the 'as a service' model, and at the same time capture even more of your data through pushing the use of AI on these services.

AI under vectoralism

From the inception of the word “robot”, coined in the play Rossum's Universal Robots, our understanding of robots (and by extension AI) was as a kind of mechanized servant, used to do menial tasks that humans wish to offload.

Many companies present generative AI in the form of a digital assistant, like ChatGPT or Copilot, something you can ask for a variety of different things like generating lists or paraphrasing text

How vector differs from capitalism

A good way of understanding the difference is to look at the role and function of advertising under capitalism and vectoralism respectively.

Under Capitalism, advertising is meant to sell products and the brand attached to them. Ads had to be able to get viewers to either buy the product or to see the brand in a more favorable light in order for the advertisement to be seen as successful.

For better or worse, people were talking about and engaging with these campaigns, cementing the corresponding brands within the cultural memory.

With capital as the dictative property, the labor, land and resources that go into advertising served the needs of capital.

Under vectoralism, multiple sectors are now making their revenue primarily through advertising. Whether someone actually is convinced to buy a product is secondary to the data that can be collected from someone viewing an ad, and the datasets that can be made and sold or otherwise used from that data.

Who cares whether your advertisement actually translates into a sale if simply by having someone view the ad, you can generate demographic data, click-through statistics, ad revenue, and more?

With vectors of information as the dictative property, the capital generated from advertising becomes something that is used in service of the interests of the vectoralist class.

3. A Vectoralist Future

Permanent Vectoralist Inevitability

Permanent Vectoralist Inevitability is a term coined by community organizer and political scientist Carissa Cheow Hui Ying. As she puts it:

> *“Permanent Vectoralist Inevitability is its successor-designate and its logical extension: that a vectoralist system built upon information extraction is the only realistic system and therefore the only possible future for all of time left.*
>
> *According to this worldview, digital advancements such as AI are almost taken to be an understood-by-definition, all-encompassing synonym for "the future". That's all the future entails.*
>
> *If this informs all we do in such a totalistic manner, then we're fucked, and we are fucking ourselves over by sealing all the exit routes off and taking refuge in an automated torture chamber whose exits we sealed off. These are the first steps to the formation of a reserve army of hackers, analogous to the reserve army of labour. This is precarity.*
>
> *Today we witness a war between two theories of the future: "there is only one way" versus "there are many ways".”*

This is, in many ways, the foundational philosophy of the vectoralist class, and it informs the way they think, the actions they take, and the consequences that play out from there.

The current generative AI bubble becomes much more comprehensible when you view it through the lens of vectoralist interests and Permanent Vectoralist Inevitability.

AI cuts humans out of the process of information production, allowing the creation of vector which involves minimal human input and maximal control to those who hold the keys to the AI, while allowing for an exponential growth in vector.

Individual vectoralists are thus incentivized to consolidate their control over the most advanced AI, and the resources and supply chains that make it tick, to entrench their own position within both the vectoralist class itself and across all other extractive classes, especially when vectoralism is taken to be permanent, which would make the vectoralist class the permanent dictative class.

Life-as-a-service

The rise of subscription services across many different industries and products is also strongly tied to vectoralism. The actual subscription allows companies to charge users in perpetuity and gain more revenue while providing the same product, but the main goal in the 'as a service' model is to ensure that users do not actually own the product itself.

Your media libraries, software, even the machines used to store all the files and information you use are no longer owned by you, and are instead rented out to you, with services like Spotify and Netflix being the most well known examples of this. Mobile